(c) During the survey conducted on South Western Railway, 91% of the people objected to the introduction of additional side berths in coaches.

(d) Yes, Sir. It has been decided to discontinue the scheme.

(e) A comprehensive assessment of the expenditure incurred is not available at this juncture.

Bogibeel bridge project

252. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the execution of Bogibeel bridge project over river Brahmaputra, total allocation made during the year 2008-09, executing agencies finalized for various component of work including the work done departmentally;

(b) the target set for each component of work including both side approach road;

(c) whether payment of compensation to the people affected by land acquisition is completed; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The work on various activities of Bogibeel rail-cum-road bridge has been taken up including land acquisition, earthwork, minor and major bridges on the link lines. The land acquisition and boulder collection for guide bund and protection works has almost been completed. Earthwork to the tune of 248.53 lakh cum out of 298.78 lakh cum, 13 super structure out of 19 major bridges and 90 out of 98 minor bridges have already been completed. For the main bridge, sub-structure, well foundations have been taken up and for the super structure, tender is under process. The work of South guide bund has also been taken up. An expenditure of Rs. 439.46 crore was incurred on the project during 2008-09. The target for completion of the project is now revised to March, 2014.

(b) Targets for completion of various components of work is as under:-

(i) Chalkhowa-Moranhat South Bank rail link—completed.

(ii) Guide Bunds — June, 2011.

(iii) Main bridge substructure — March, 2012.

(iv) Road approaches by PWD — March, 2013.

(v) North Bank rail link — Dec., 2013.

(vi) Main bridge super structure road deck and track linking — March, 2014.

(c) The payment towards land acquisition has already been made to the District Authorities. The disbursement to the affected people is to be done by the State Authorities.

(d) Does not arise.

Tatkal scheme

253. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:
SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal to cut the premium on talkal tickets and reduce its booking period;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether premium on tatkal tickets is very high and Government proposes to reduce the amount; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) The matter is under review.

Introduction of pilgrimage express trains

254. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has plans to introduce pilgrimage express trains throughout the country at subsidized rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what efforts Railways have put in to promote pilgrimage tourism in the country, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Facility for booking special trains by private parties is already in force on Indian Railways. Further, Special trains are run and trains are augmented to the extent feasible and justified to clear the extra rush of passengers during Kumbh Mela, Urs, Puja, Haj, Melas and other large festivals held in pilgrimage centers as per demand.

Cheaper food packets and mineral water at stations

255. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to introduce cheaper food packets at various railway stations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is also considering providing mineral water to passengers at railway stations at subsidized rates; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?